

## Message Text

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ACTION H-03

INFO OCT-01 EUR-08 NEA-07 ISO-00 SS-07 NSC-06 AID-01  
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FM AMEMBASSY TUNIS  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6444  
INFO AMEMBASSY PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L TUNIS 2641

DEPARTMENT PASS NSC TO DR. BRZEZINSKI

H PASS SENATOR PERCY'S OFFICE FOR MRS. JACOBSEN

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR MILI MASS TS US UR XA XF LY EG

SUBJECT: SENATOR PERCY'S AUDIENCE WITH PRESIDENT BOURGUIBA

1. SENATOR PERCY, ON PRIVATE VISIT TO TUNISIA, WAS  
INVITED TO CALL AT PRESIDENTIAL PALACE APRIL 15 FOR  
AUDIENCE WITH PRESIDENT BOURGUIBA. PRESENT ALSO WERE  
FOREIGN MINISTER CHATTY, PRESIDENT'S SON HABIB BOURGUIBA,  
JR. AND AMBASSADOR MULCAHY.

2. MIDDLE EAST: SENATOR PERCY SAID THAT SINCE HIS LAST  
TALK WITH BOURGUIBA NINE MONTHS AGO HE FELT PRESIDENT  
WOULD AGREE PROGRESS HAD BEEN MADE AT LEAST IN CHANGING  
CLIMATE IN MIDDLE EAST. PRESIDENT IMMEDIATELY AGREED,  
BUT PLEADED FOR US TO BE IN CLOSER TOUCH WITH "THE ARABS".  
HE HAD BEEN PLEASED TO NOTE PRESIDENT CARTER'S  
RECOGNITION OF NEED FOR PALESTINIAN HOMELAND. HE  
RECALLED THAT, WHEREAS UN HAD GIVEN PALESTINIANS HALF  
OF ORIGINAL HOMELAND, THEY NOW HAVE LESS THAN ONE-THIRD.  
SENATOR PERCY SOUGHT PRESIDENT BOURGUIBA'S VIEWS ON THE  
FUTURE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN KING HUSSEIN AND ARAFAT. HE  
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WONDERED WHETHER ARAFAT COULD RULE A PALESTINIAN HOMELAND  
AND PREVENT IT FROM FOLLOWING EXPANSIONIST POLICIES AT  
LEAST FOR TEN YEARS. BOURGUIBA REPLIED THAT HE SAW NO  
POSSIBILITY FOR AN EXPANSIONIST PALESTINIAN STATE AS LONG  
AS ISRAEL REMAINED STRONG MILITARILY. HE COULD NOT SPEAK  
EITHER FOR PALESTINIANS OR JORDANIANS  
REGARDING ACCEPTABILITY OF FEDERAL OR NON-FEDERAL CONCEPT.

IF PRESIDENT CARTER WOULD INVITE PALESTINIANS TO TALK HE WOULD HEAR THEIR VIEWS ON THIS SUBJECT. THE ARABS, HE ADDED, HAVE ALREADY MADE GREAT CONCESSIONS AND NOW US MUST ENDEAVOR OBTAIN CONCESSIONS BY GOI. SENATOR PERCY REPLIED THAT HIS FEAR WAS NOT FOR PALESTINIAN EXPANSION AGAINST ISRAEL, BUT RATHER AGAINST OTHER ARAB STATES, PARTICULARLY IF CROWDED INTO A SMALL, NON-VIABLE TERRITORY. BOURGUIBA ADMITTED THERE COULD BE SOME PROBLEM IN THIS REGARD SINCE PALESTINIANS WOULD GREATLY OUTNUMBER JORDANIANS.

3. TUNISIAN-LIBYAN RELATIONS: SENATOR PERCY ASKED PRESIDENT'S VIEW ON WHAT HE SEES AS QADHAFI'S VISION OF HIS FUTURE. BOURGUIBA REPLIED THAT, BEFORE QADHAFI CAME UNDER SOVIET INFLUENCE HE USED TO CONDEMN SOVIET ATHEISM AND SOVIET ARMS SUPPLY TO EGYPT. HE HAS CHANGED. HE SEES LIBYA AS "COUNTRY WITH NO PEOPLE BUT WITH A LEADER". HE SEES EGYPT AS A LAND "WITH PEOPLE BUT NO LEADER".

4. SOVIETS AND AFRICA: REPLYING TO PERCY'S REQUEST FOR HIS VIEWS ON SOVIET INFLUENCE IN AFRICAN AFFAIRS, PRESIDENT SPOKE CRITICALLY OF RECENT TRAVELS IN AFRICA BY PODGORNYY AND CASTRO. PRIME MINISTER NOUIRA HAD JUST RETURNED FROM SOVIET UNION CONVINCED THAT QADHAFI IS BACKED BY USSR. HE SAID KOSYGIN REJECTED A NOTE NOUIRA PROPOSED TO LEAVE STATING TUNISIA'S POSITION ON CURRENT OFFSHORE BOUNDARY DISPUTE WITH LIBYA, ON GROUNDS THAT MATTER WAS "TOO COMPLICATED" AND IN WHICH USSR COULD NOT TAKE SIDES. WHEN KOSYGIN PROPOSED SIGNING FRIENDSHIP TREATY NOUIRA  
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REPLIED HE WOULD BE UNABLE TO DISCUSS MATTER SINCE HIS PRESIDENT WAS NOT PRESENT. TUNISIA ALSO HAS REFUSED, AND WILL REFUSE, SOVIET ARMS. SENATOR PERCY COMMENDED PRESIDENT ON THIS STANCE AND ADDED THAT, ON ACCEPTING SOVIET ARMS, ONE USUALLY PAYS A BIGGER PRICE FOR THEM IN THE END, CITING EGYPTIAN EXPERIENCE.

5. CURRENT US POLICIES: SENATOR PERCY ASKED BOURGUIBA WHETHER HE HAD ANY VIEWS OR QUESTIONS ON CURRENT CHANGES IN US ADMINISTRATION. BOURGUIBA SAID THAT HE HOPED CARTER ADMINISTRATION WILL ADOPT NEW FIRM POLICIES, PARTICULARLY IN MIDELE EAST AND OBLIGE ISRAELIS TO MAKE NECESSARY CONCESSIONS FOR PEACE. PERCY CHARACTERIZED PRESIDENT CARTER AS "CREATIVE, IMAGINATIVE AND COURAGEOUS" WITH NO HESITATION TO UPSET ANYONE WHEN THE SITUATION WARRANTED. HE IS GIVING AFRICA AND MIDDLE EAST HIGHEST PRIORITY CONSIDERATION. PARTICULARLY ENCOURAGING IS THE PRESIDENT'S PRACTICE OF TAKING CONGRESS INTO HIS CONFIDENCE IN FOREIGN POLICY FORMATION.

THERE IS NO QUESTION BUT THAT TRUE BI-PARTISAN FOREIGN  
POLICY HAS RETURNED TO US SCENE.

6. IN CLOSING PRESIDENT BOURGUIBA ASKED SENATOR PERCY  
TO REMEMBER HOW HEAVILY GOT IS COUNTING ON US FOR HELP  
THROUGH DURATION OF NEW FIVE-YEAR PLAN WHICH WILL BRING  
TUNISIA TO TAKE-OFF. THEREFORE, HE SAID, WHAT TUNISIA  
NEEDS FROM US IS MORE "GAS" (TO FUEL FURTHER ECONOMIC  
AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT).  
MULCAHY

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## Message Attributes

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